



# NEBRASKA SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

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**Statement by Bill Miller, Upland NE  
Vice President – Nebraska Soybean Association  
On behalf of the Nebraska Soybean Association**

Governor's Farm Bill Listening Session  
November 14, 2005 – Kearney NE

I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today on behalf of the 1,200 members of the Nebraska Soybean Association. My name is Bill Miller a farmer from Upland, NE and I currently serve as Vice President of the Nebraska Soybean Association. We are appreciative of the Governor's willingness to provide these listening sessions throughout the state to gather input from the farmers as we begin development of the next Farm Bill.

I was asked to share our organizations assessment of the current farm bill programs for renewable energy and other value added agricultural products.

With the ever rising prices for fuel, the demand for renewable fuels such as biodiesel and ethanol have really taken a big step. Demand has been stimulated in part by the passage of the federal tax incentive. The signing of the landmark Energy Bill in August of 2005 included key provisions to promote biodiesel's growth, including the extension of a federal excise tax credit through 2008. The bill creates a 7.5 billion gallon a year Renewable Fuels Standard, which sets the course for greater use of biodiesel and ethanol.

As previously stated by Bart Ruth at an earlier listening session, "the need to lessen our dependence on fossil fuels creates a great opportunity for agriculture and should be considered a major component of the next farm bill. The bio-based energy provisions in the recently passed Energy Bill should provide a springboard for expansion of agriculture based energy research and development. One concept that should be considered is the creation of an Ag bio-based strategic energy reserve, where producers are compensated for growing crops that are used in energy creation. Expanded production of ethanol and biodiesel, coupled with new investment in biomass conversion technologies and wind power generation, will provide new drivers for our state's economy." I want to reaffirm this need for including agricultural based energy research and development in the next Farm Bill.

The vision for the Ag Energy Work Group initiative is to have "Agriculture provide 25% of the total energy consumed in the United States by 2025 while continuing to produce abundant, safe and affordable food and fiber." Soybean and corn farmers have shown that we can become modern day energy providers. Through emerging technology we can turn crop residues, ag by products and wastes into value added energy feedstocks.

Increased funding for agriculture research should also receive major consideration in the next Farm Bill. Value added products developed by research dollars play an important role in agriculture. Over one million pounds of soy-based resins have been used in agricultural equipment since 1997. As the price for petroleum continues to rise, several industries, including the automotive sector, may consider looking to soybeans as a more cost effective alternative to petroleum-based plastics. Increased Federal funds that might allow producers to band together in new-age coops to move up the value chain are needed in the next Farm Bill.

In closing, the next Farm Bill needs to look at policy to make renewable fuels a bigger part of the country's energy future. We have the valuable inputs right here in Nebraska and the U.S. to meet our all our energy needs. The time is right for Agriculture to be the number one supplier of energy.

Thank you.